

NEWS Release



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Four Kentucky women honored by First Lady Judi Patton and the Kentucky Commission on Women

Frankfort, KY—Kentucky's first lady, two musical artists, and a leader in politics and economic development were honored today as their portraits were unveiled as the 2003 additions to the *Kentucky Women Remembered* Capitol exhibit. This prestigious honor was bestowed on Rosemary Clooney, Judi Conway Patton, Katherine Peden, and Jean Ritchie.

Rosemary Clooney (Mason County, 1928-2002)—Widely renowned as one of the greatest jazz band vocalists of all time, Ms. Clooney's career spanned over four decades and included hit songs, film roles, and her own radio and television programs. Ms. Clooney spent much of her career in California but her heart was always in Kentucky.

Judi Conway Patton (Pike County)—Judi Patton tackled tough issues like domestic violence, sexual assault, child abuse, and breast cancer in her role as First Lady. A tireless champion for the protection of families and children, her sincerity and devotion to addressing serious issues in the Commonwealth are praised by the media and deeply appreciated by the people of Kentucky.

Katherine Graham Peden (Christian County)—The first Kentucky woman nominated as a U. S. Senate candidate by a major party, Ms. Peden served on the first President's Commission on the Status of Women, and was the first woman appointed as Commissioner of Commerce in Kentucky. She also served as the national president of Business and Professional Women's Clubs. She was active for decades in economic growth issues at the national and state level.

Jean Ritchie (Perry County)— Jean Ritchie has brought the beauty and richness of Appalachia to fans around the world. She grew up with a dulcimer in her hands and

was a Fulbright Scholar in 1952. She recently received the National Heritage Fellowship, the highest honor bestowed to individual traditional artists in the nation. An author, songwriter, and performer, Ms. Ritchie's influence on traditional folk and popular music is immeasurable.

"For the past 25 years, the *Kentucky Women Remembered* exhibit has provided the Commission on Women with the rare opportunity to honor outstanding KY females and publicly recognize their achievements," said Kentucky Commission on Women Executive Director Betsy Nowland-Curry.

The original *Kentucky Women Remembered* exhibit began in 1978 and consists of watercolor portraits of outstanding women in Kentucky history and serves to educate Kentuckians about women's contributions to the Commonwealth. In 1996, Through the tireless efforts of Mrs. Judi Patton, the *Kentucky Women Remembered* exhibit was granted its permanent home in the west wing of the State Capitol.

Acknowledging that we have no shortage of outstanding women, the Kentucky Women Remembered Committee (made of Commission on Women board members and outside volunteers) selects women to be included in the exhibit from nominations submitted by Kentucky citizens.

Governor Patton signed a proclamation earlier this week designating March as Women's History Month across the Commonwealth which was read at the event.

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The **Kentucky Commission on Women** works to improve the status of the women of Kentucky, educates the public about issues and challenges pertaining to women, and acts as an informational clearinghouse for women around the Commonwealth.